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U.S. Census Bureau

This release contains sensitive economic
data not to be released before 10:00 a.m. Tuesday,
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Preliminary: U.S. Imports for Consumption of Steel Products
March 2003

The U.S. Census Bureau, through the Department of Commerce, announced today that preliminary March steel imports were **\$0.9 billion (2.0 million** metric tons). This was a increase of \$0.2 billion (0.5 million metric tons) from the preliminary February totals of \$0.8 billion (1.5 million metric tons).

The February to March change in steel imports, based on metric tonnage, reflected increases primarily in wire rods and blooms, billets, and slabs. Monthly changes in steel imports reflected increases primarily with Turkey, China, and South Africa.

The year to date final statistics through February 2003 showed steel imports of 3.8 million metric tons, a decrease of 1.7 million metric tons from the 5.5 million metric tons through February 2002. The largest commodity decreases were in blooms, billets, and slabs; and reinforcing bars. The largest country decreases were with Brazil, Russia, and Japan. The largest country increase was with Mexico.

Notes:

The data in this report are preliminary and subject to revisions.

Analysis of recent months for steel product imports indicates the value of preliminary data should equal about 96 percent of the final value reported in the regular monthly trade statistics report. Preliminary data reported for individual steel categories and at the individual country of origin level have been less consistently predictive of the final data reported in the regular monthly trade statistics. For further details visit the Foreign Trade Division web site at: www.census.gov/foreign-trade/www/. On the web site you can access product by country and country by product tables.

The next release is May 28, 2003